

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Patent Application of)	
Hiroyuki Kano et al.)	Group Art Unit: 3661
Application No.: 10/690,666)	Examiner: Cuong H Nguyen
Filed: October 23, 2003)	Confirmation No.: 5862
For: AUTOMATIC CLUTCH CONTROL)	
DEVICE)	
)	
)	
)	



COMMENTS ON STATEMENT OF REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

The March 1, 2006 Notice of Allowability is accompanied by an Examiner's Statement of Allowable Subject Matter & Reasons for Allowance. The Statement notes that Claim 11 is allowable over the prior art because the prior art does not disclose or suggest an automatic clutch control device that comprises, together with the other claimed features,

a clutch control means is operable for changing, in accordance with a running state of the vehicle, a speed of the connecting operation defined as extending from a beginning of the connecting operation to an end of the connecting operation.

Reviewing this portion of the Statement in the context of the wording in Claim 11 reveals that the Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance contains an inadvertent error. Claim 11 recites that the "clutch control means is operable for changing, in accordance with a running state of the vehicle, at least one of: a speed

of the connecting operation defined as extending from a beginning of the connecting operation to an end of the connecting operation; and a speed of the disconnecting operation defined as extending from a beginning of the disconnecting operation to an end of the disconnecting operation." Thus, Claim 11 recites that the control means is operable to change at least one of the connecting operation speed and the disconnecting operation speed, whereas the comment in the Examiner's Statement of Allowable Subject Matter & Reasons for Allowance only refers to changing the connecting operation speed.

The inadvertent nature of this error is apparent from the later comment in the Statement noting that the prior art does not address the speed of a clutch "engaging/disengaging" operation.

This paper is being filed to clarify the record on this point and note that the comments in the Examiner's Statement of Allowable Subject Matter & Reasons for Allowance should not be understood to imply that the allowed claims in this application set forth anything different than that which the claims themselves recite.

If, for any reason, the Examiner disagrees with the comments set forth above, the Examiner is kindly asked to contact the undersigned at the number provided below to discuss this matter.

Respectfully submitted,

BUCHANAN INGERSOLL PC

Date: May 26, 2006

By: Matthew L. Schneider
Matthew L. Schneider
Registration No. 32,814

P.O. Box 1404
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1404
(703) 836-6620